

**U.S. Department of Education - EDCAPS
G5-Technical Review Form (New)**

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/14/2012 02:35 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Highlander Charter School (U282P120001)

Reader #3: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Record and potential for success of collaboration		
1. Success of collaboration	15	12
Quality of the lead applicant		
1. Lead applicant quality	15	12
Quality of the project design		
1. Design quality	15	11
Potential for scalability		
1. Scalability	15	14
Innovation		
1. Innovation	15	11
Quality of the Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	9
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	9
Sub Total	95	78
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Persistently Lowest-Achieving School Turnarounds		
1. Turn Around Schools	5	3
Sub Total	5	3
Total	100	81

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Collaboration Awards - 3: 84.282P

Reader #3: *****

Applicant: The Highlander Charter School (U282P120001)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Record and potential for success of collaboration

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant's past or existing collaboration has improved educational outcomes and operational practices; and
(2) The extent to which the applicant's proposed collaboration and dissemination plan will achieve one or more of the following demonstrable results:
 - (i) Improved operational practices and productivity among all partners in such areas as financial performance and sustainability, governing board performance and stewardship, and parent and community engagement;
 - (ii) Improved student achievement (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications);
 - (iii) Improved student attendance and retention, and improved high school graduation rates;
 - (iv) Improved rates of college matriculation and college graduation;
 - (v) Improved rates of attendance and graduation from other postsecondary (i.e., non-college) institutions or programs.

Strengths:

Highlander has demonstrated past collaboration with six different partners that have resulted in improved educational outcomes, as documented by clear data collection through tests such as AIMS web and NECAP. There are also two additional projects that are new and showing similarly promising results.

Weaknesses:

The application is lacking adequate demonstration of improved operational practices in areas such as financial performance, governing board performance, and parent and community engagement. In Section II financial performance is addressed with Highlander but not the participating schools.

Reader's Score: 12

Selection Criteria - Quality of the lead applicant

1. (1) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student achievement (as defined in the NIA) and attainment for all students, including, as applicable, educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter school.
(2) Either--
 - (i) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps for the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter school; or
 - (ii) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which there have not been significant achievement gaps between any of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter school and to which significant gains in student achievement (as defined in this notice) have been made with all populations of students served by the charter school.
- (3) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has achieved results (including, where applicable and available, performance on statewide tests, student attendance and retention rates, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college

persistence rates) for students from low-income families and other educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter school that are above the average academic achievement results for such students attending other public schools in the State.

Strengths:

Highlander's academic achievement shows improvement in both literacy and math from the NECAP trends over a 5-year period. Student achievement is particularly high in literacy. The application also presents data to indicate that Highlander students are closing the achievement gap in nearly all subgroups, in comparison to the district and state results.

Weaknesses:

There is no evidence on student attendance and retention rates, or high school graduation rates.

Reader's Score: 12

Selection Criteria - Quality of the project design

- 1. The extent to which the applicant proposes a high-quality plan to use its Collaboration Award funds to improve educational outcomes and operational practices in public schools, including public charter schools.**

Strengths:

The project design integrates research-based methodologies and focuses on creating a sustainable framework for literacy improvement which trains and empowers teachers. The project design is based off an existing program, which has demonstrated promising results with an increase of literacy grade-level benchmarks in year one. The program currently serves two schools and the application proposes an expansion to add three additional schools within the district. The three additional partners have already been targeted.

The model outlines three phases with distinct action plans targeted to build sustainable frameworks within the school that support literacy reform. These are coupled with four clear outcomes that are targeted by the end of year two.

Weaknesses:

The plan does not outline any other charter school partners but rather all traditional district schools.

Reader's Score: 11

Selection Criteria - Potential for scalability

- 1. The extent to which the applicant's proposed collaboration can be replicated or adapted beyond the participating partners by other public schools or LEAs, including public charter schools and charter school LEAs, and sustained over the long-term.**

Strengths:

The application outlines three facets of sustainability: infrastructure, knowledge transfer, and consensus-building; with a convincing plan to equip schools and teachers to continue best literacy practices after the grant ends. Additionally, several strong dissemination strategies are described, including research, social media, short videos, local and regional presentations, and most powerfully, through a fellowship program.

Weaknesses:

Again, it is unclear whether there are any charter LEA's that will directly benefit from this program, aside from the dissemination at charter conferences, which could lead to future replication.

Reader's Score: 14

Selection Criteria - Innovation

1. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that its proposed collaboration, as well as its dissemination plan, are either (i) substantially different from other efforts in its area of focus; or (ii) substantially more effective than similar efforts in its area of focus.

Strengths:

While the application recognizes that the program does not necessarily propose a drastically different approach since it is implementing research-based methods, it presents several reasons why it aims to be more effective. Namely, these reasons are through differentiation, use of student data, and intensive and comprehensive support that is aligned with other initiatives.

Weaknesses:

Although the program does offer effective strategies, there is insufficient evidence to truly set it apart from others—particularly through the lack of compare/contrast of existing programs.

Reader's Score: 11

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - (i) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator; and
 - (ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

Resumes and description of experiences were provided for the two main staff members, which demonstrate sound qualifications.

Weaknesses:

There was no mention of encouraging applications from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented.

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining

the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Strengths:

The application presents four objectives with corresponding actions and timelines at the district, partner school, and classroom level. The outline provides a comprehensive view that is reasonable to attain within the proposed budget and timeline. An evaluator has been selected based on her areas of expertise. In addition to an external evaluator, additional measures will be used to monitor progress and assess project impact: DIBELS, CBM measurement, NECAP literacy data, and Survey of Teacher Knowledge.

Weaknesses:

Although the application states that highlander teachers and administrators will have specific roles that will not consume undue time, these are not clearly defined within the application.

Reader's Score: 9

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Persistently Lowest-Achieving School Turnarounds

1. Turning Around Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools

Note: In order to receive preference under this competitive preference priority, the applicant must specify that it is responding to this competitive preference priority.

To meet this priority, projects must be designed to address one or more of the following priority areas:

- (a) Improving student achievement (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications, or NIA) notice) in persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in the NIA).
- (b) Increasing graduation rates (as defined in te NIA) and college enrollment rates for students in persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in the NIA).
- (c) Providing services to students enrolled in persistently lowest-achieving schools.

Note: For purposes of this priority, the Department considers schools that are identified as Tier I or Tier II schools under the School Improvement Grants Program (see 75 FR 66363) as part of a State's approved FY 2009 or FY 2010 applications to be persistently lowest-achieving schools. A list of these Tier I and Tier II schools can be found on the Department's Web site at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html>.

Strengths:

Data and evidence have been provided to indicate improved student achievement at Highlander. The project is also designed to increase student achievement at low performing schools.

Weaknesses:

No support was provided to indicate increased graduation rates.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/14/2012 02:35 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/14/2012 03:56 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Highlander Charter School (U282P120001)

Reader #1: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Record and potential for success of collaboration		
1. Success of collaboration	15	12
Quality of the lead applicant		
1. Lead applicant quality	15	12
Quality of the project design		
1. Design quality	15	9
Potential for scalability		
1. Scalability	15	5
Innovation		
1. Innovation	15	8
Quality of the Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	8
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	6
Sub Total	95	60
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Persistently Lowest-Achieving School Turnarounds		
1. Turn Around Schools	5	0
Sub Total	5	0
Total	100	60

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Collaboration Awards - 3: 84.282P

Reader #1: *****

Applicant: The Highlander Charter School (U282P120001)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Record and potential for success of collaboration

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant's past or existing collaboration has improved educational outcomes and operational practices; and
- (2) The extent to which the applicant's proposed collaboration and dissemination plan will achieve one or more of the following demonstrable results:
 - (i) Improved operational practices and productivity among all partners in such areas as financial performance and sustainability, governing board performance and stewardship, and parent and community engagement;
 - (ii) Improved student achievement (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications);
 - (iii) Improved student attendance and retention, and improved high school graduation rates;
 - (iv) Improved rates of college matriculation and college graduation;
 - (v) Improved rates of attendance and graduation from other postsecondary (i.e., non-college) institutions or programs.

Strengths:

Application provides an overview of previous successful collaboration projects that have demonstrated a significant increase in student achievement on benchmark tests in the area of literacy. Specifically the application adequately describes collaboration between traditional public schools and the charter school.

Weaknesses:

The application provides only partial academic results for some of the collaboration projects and only speaks towards improved student achievement in literacy.

Reader's Score: 12

Selection Criteria - Quality of the lead applicant

1. (1) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student achievement (as defined in the NIA) and attainment for all students, including, as applicable, educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter school.
- (2) Either--
 - (i) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps for the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter school; or
 - (ii) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which there have not been significant achievement gaps between any of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter school and to which significant gains in student achievement (as defined in this notice) have been made with all populations of students served by the charter school.
- (3) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has achieved results (including, where applicable and available, performance on statewide tests, student attendance and retention rates, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates) for students from low-income families and other educationally disadvantaged

students served by the charter school that are above the average academic achievement results for such students attending other public schools in the State.

Strengths:

Applicant provides documented evidence of increased student achievement for their at-risk students and provides district and state-level comparison data to support statements. Applicant provides student achievement and attainment data for both reading and math subject areas that demonstrates success when compared to state achievement results. (Page 8)

Weaknesses:

Application fails to adequately address closing the historic achievement gaps for their students and the data provided indicates that there might be an achievement gap between two subgroups of their own students. (Page 8)

Reader's Score: 12

Selection Criteria - Quality of the project design

- 1. The extent to which the applicant proposes a high-quality plan to use its Collaboration Award funds to improve educational outcomes and operational practices in public schools, including public charter schools.**

Strengths:

Applicant includes SMART objectives for their proposed project for year 2 that are rigorous and if achieved would increase student achievement. Applicant's proposed objectives are tied to project activities and sufficient data is provided.

Weaknesses:

Applicant includes a three part plan but does not include clear milestones or action items in the plan that will ensure that the applicant's goals and objectives are achieved. Applicant does not include any performance targets for the first year of the project.

Reader's Score: 9

Selection Criteria - Potential for scalability

- 1. The extent to which the applicant's proposed collaboration can be replicated or adapted beyond the participating partners by other public schools or LEAs, including public charter schools and charter school LEAs, and sustained over the long-term.**

Strengths:

Applicant provides documentation of previous collaboration and success that this project is based on.

Weaknesses:

Applicant's dissemination and scalability plans are inadequate to ensure continued success over the long-term. Application does not describe how the project will be replicated in multiple schools or districts in a sustainable and cost effective way.

Reader's Score: 5

Selection Criteria - Innovation

1. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that its proposed collaboration, as well as its dissemination plan, are either (i) substantially different from other efforts in its area of focus; or (ii) substantially more effective than similar efforts in its area of focus.

Strengths:

Applicant's proposed project uses existing proven research methods in tandem to produce increased effects on student literacy.

Weaknesses:

Applicant does not provide sufficient documentation to demonstrate that its proposed project is sufficiently innovative or demonstrably different from other literacy reform areas nor does the applicant provide evidence that the project has more significant benefits than other similar programs.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Personnel

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:
 - (i) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator; and
 - (ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

Applicant has identified two very qualified staff members (key project personnel) to lead the proposed project and both staff members have demonstrated success in leading similar projects in the past.

Weaknesses:

Applicant does not explicitly identify a project director nor provide qualifications for an individual to serve as the project director. Additionally, the applicant does not provide documented experience managing a federal project of this scale.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Strengths:

Applicant includes a management plan that covers the project's proposed two year timeline.

Weaknesses:

Applicant's management plan does not indicate key personnel responsible for each objective/milestone. Proposed management plan and timeline are vague and are not connected with the project's proposed goals and objectives nor budget.

Reader's Score: 6

Priority Questions**Competitive Preference Priority - Persistently Lowest-Achieving School Turnarounds****1. Turning Around Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools**

Note: In order to receive preference under this competitive preference priority, the applicant must specify that it is responding to this competitive preference priority.

To meet this priority, projects must be designed to address one or more of the following priority areas:

(a) Improving student achievement (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications, or NIA) notice) in persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in the NIA).

(b) Increasing graduation rates (as defined in the NIA) and college enrollment rates for students in persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in the NIA).

(c) Providing services to students enrolled in persistently lowest-achieving schools.

Note: For purposes of this priority, the Department considers schools that are identified as Tier I or Tier II schools under the School Improvement Grants Program (see 75 FR 66363) as part of a State's approved FY 2009 or FY 2010 applications to be persistently lowest-achieving schools. A list of these Tier I and Tier II schools can be found on the Department's Web site at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html>.

Strengths:

No strengths identified.

Weaknesses:

Applicant did not include a response to this prompt.

Reader's Score: 0

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/14/2012 03:56 PM

Status: Submitted

Last Updated: 09/17/2012 02:35 PM

Technical Review Coversheet

Applicant: The Highlander Charter School (U282P120001)

Reader #2: *****

	Points Possible	Points Scored
Questions		
Selection Criteria		
Record and potential for success of collaboration		
1. Success of collaboration	15	15
Quality of the lead applicant		
1. Lead applicant quality	15	13
Quality of the project design		
1. Design quality	15	13
Potential for scalability		
1. Scalability	15	13
Innovation		
1. Innovation	15	12
Quality of the Project Personnel		
1. Project Personnel	10	8
Quality of the Management Plan		
1. Management Plan	10	10
Sub Total	95	84
Priority Questions		
Competitive Preference Priority		
Persistently Lowest-Achieving School Turnarounds		
1. Turn Around Schools	5	3
Sub Total	5	3
Total	100	87

Technical Review Form

Panel #3 - Collaboration Awards - 3: 84.282P

Reader #2: *****

Applicant: The Highlander Charter School (U282P120001)

Questions

Selection Criteria - Record and potential for success of collaboration

1. (1) The extent to which the applicant's past or existing collaboration has improved educational outcomes and operational practices; and
(2) The extent to which the applicant's proposed collaboration and dissemination plan will achieve one or more of the following demonstrable results:
 - (i) Improved operational practices and productivity among all partners in such areas as financial performance and sustainability, governing board performance and stewardship, and parent and community engagement;
 - (ii) Improved student achievement (as defined in the Notice Inviting Applications);
 - (iii) Improved student attendance and retention, and improved high school graduation rates;
 - (iv) Improved rates of college matriculation and college graduation;
 - (v) Improved rates of attendance and graduation from other postsecondary (i.e., non-college) institutions or programs.

Strengths:

Highlander Institute has engaged a selection of assessment tools to stimulate growth in student achievement such as, an online data system from the University of Oregon called Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS). In addition, as part of the overall strategy Highlander included the Response to Intervention strategies to the matrix, with its multi-tiered instruction and intervention matched to the students individual needs identified by DIBELS. Rhode Island is one of four states that uses the NECAP performance indicators statewide. These data indicators were also used by the Highlander Institute to measure student outcome. Also teacher perceptions were included through the use of PET-R surveys. Highlander has included three strong assessment strategies based on data outcomes, to guide their professional development-based program. Highlander has shown an adequate selection of assessment tools as indicators to monitor the success of student academic growth and educational outcomes.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses noted.

Reader's Score: 15

Selection Criteria - Quality of the lead applicant

1. (1) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in significantly increasing student achievement (as defined in the NIA) and attainment for all students, including, as applicable, educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter school.
(2) Either--
 - (i) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has demonstrated success in closing historic achievement gaps for the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter school; or
 - (ii) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which there have not been

significant achievement gaps between any of the subgroups of students described in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v)(II) of the ESEA at the charter school and to which significant gains in student achievement (as defined in this notice) have been made with all populations of students served by the charter school. (3) The degree, including the consistency over the past three years, to which the applicant has achieved results (including, where applicable and available, performance on statewide tests, student attendance and retention rates, high school graduation rates, college attendance rates, and college persistence rates) for students from low-income families and other educationally disadvantaged students served by the charter school that are above the average academic achievement results for such students attending other public schools in the State.

Strengths:

Significant NECAP gains were evident in reading by 19 percent over a three-year span school-wide.

Weaknesses:

In mathematics, Highlander used a four year calculation to determine percentage points rather than a three year calculation as was used to project reading scores. It is probable that having not included this fourth year would have a negative effect on the overall NECAP 22% calculation. Some overall scores were based on four-year trajectories and others were based on three-year trajectories. This is a sign of inconsistency, and leaves the reader to wonder why.

In addition, no mention is made regarding improvements for specific ethnicities, for the purpose of monitoring achievement and closing the achievement gap for the English Language Learner subgroup of students or African American, in particular, with no evidence included that shows progress in closing this gap differential.

Benchmark classrooms, pg. 35, may not yield the same evidence for high school classrooms because of the deviations in ability levels of students.

In the overall assessment of improvements, Writing is brought out as one of the areas of improvement. However, in the NECAP discussion no data was included concerning 5th grade Writing achievement. There was unclear delineation of gaps in performance identified at each grade level.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Quality of the project design

- 1. The extent to which the applicant proposes a high-quality plan to use its Collaboration Award funds to improve educational outcomes and operational practices in public schools, including public charter schools.**

Strengths:

This model begins with an assessment of students learning needs, then address each learning need identified through professional development, then address the implementation of a longevity plan of action and expanded partnerships throughout the district, state and beyond pg. 11-13.

Weaknesses:

The performance targets, pg. 13 seem to actually be future long-term goals. There were no present targets clearly identified and addressed in the design.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Potential for scalability

1. **The extent to which the applicant's proposed collaboration can be replicated or adapted beyond the participating partners by other public schools or LEAs, including public charter schools and charter school LEAs, and sustained over the long-term.**

Strengths:

A school system whose student achievement levels improves with an increased student population, proportionally to the capacity of each teacher to student ratios, can be determined as a scalable school. There was sufficient evidence found to identify the ability to replicate the Professional Development models used by Highlander Institute. This system can be easily replicated; high performing larger school districts also use Rtl, a comparable progress monitoring assessment system and professional development strategies similar to Highlander. The strategy itself is not exclusive to schools with the similar characteristics. Pages 31 to 37 provides ample evidence that can be tailored to any particular school, to include actions with a timeline directed toward addressing growth targets and goals.

Weaknesses:

A potential weakness is in not anticipating varying demographics and differing academic and cultural needs of various school populations, and proactively integrating strategies in their Professional Development to accommodate for the different ways teachers will use this professional development strategies in their classrooms and with their students. Also, if individual schools have not developed a strong school culture, along with low performance, teacher efficacy will be an issue and will negatively affect the scalability of this three phase model.

Reader's Score: 13

Selection Criteria - Innovation

1. **The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that its proposed collaboration, as well as its dissemination plan, are either (i) substantially different from other efforts in its area of focus; or (ii) substantially more effective than similar efforts in its area of focus.**

Strengths:

If we look at literacy reform specifically, pg. 40, then it can be identified as innovation. Highlanders literacy reform was substantially more effective than similar efforts by other schools.

Weaknesses:

However, math and writing reforms were not addressed as thoroughly as needed to lay the foundation for college readiness. Moreover, there does not seem to be a solid structure in place, for developing and implementing innovative ideas. Regular professional development and academic coaching alone are not assuring effective innovation.

Reader's Score: 12

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Project Personnel

1. **The Secretary considers the quality of the personnel who will carry out the proposed project. In determining the quality of project personnel, the Secretary considers the extent to which the applicant encourages applications from persons who are members of groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age, or disability. In addition, the Secretary considers the following factors:**
 - (i) **The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of the project director or principal investigator; and**

(ii) The qualifications, including relevant training and experience, of key project personnel.

Strengths:

It was evident that the two primary RILP project directors are highly qualified to facilitate the planned initiatives.

Weaknesses:

No evidence was found that included the school Principals influence in the matrix. This missing leadership element may be a weakness.

Also, there was no representation nor requests for viable contribution from member groups that have traditionally been underrepresented based on race, color, national origin, gender, age or disability.

Reader's Score: 8

Selection Criteria - Quality of the Management Plan

1. The Secretary considers the quality of the management plan for the proposed project. In determining the quality of the management plan for the proposed project, the Secretary considers the adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Strengths:

The Highlander Institute appears to be a separate entity as evidenced in pg. 42, that is being implemented and facilitated by employees of Highlander Charter School including various teachers. This appears to be a hybrid or a marriage of an outside consulting firm that is ran from the inside grafted into the school structure. However, this management plan which includes a forecast of full project objectives pg. 42, evident in the timeline of activities of where they would like to go if funded, is very impressive.

Weaknesses:

No weaknesses found.

Reader's Score: 10

Priority Questions

Competitive Preference Priority - Persistently Lowest-Achieving School Turnarounds

1. Turning Around Persistently Lowest-Achieving Schools

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- (c) Providing services to students enrolled in persistently lowest-achieving schools.

Note: For purposes of this priority, the Department considers schools that are identified as Tier I or Tier II schools under the School Improvement Grants Program (see 75 FR 66363) as part of a State's approved FY 2009 or FY 2010 applications to be persistently lowest-achieving schools. A list of these

Tier I and Tier II schools can be found on the Department's Web site at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html>.

Strengths:

(a) As evidence for student achievement, Baldwin, Fallon, Highlander, and Fort Barton Elementary Schools all provided data indicating substantial improvements as stated in the report. The four schools reported improvements averaging 28 percent in the number of students reaching literacy benchmarks, while at the same time the total number of students in the intensive category was significantly reduced. The schools monitored progress using DIBELS (Dynamic Indicator of Basic English Literacy Skills), which is a multi-leveled monitoring and assessment system indicating progress in English language comprehension and reading skills. These gains were the result of the Rhode Island Literacy Partnership that included intricate RTI strategies used in professional development workshops for teachers directed at student achievement, pg. 1.

Weaknesses:

Although it was clear that Highlanders multiple dissemination projects data showed ample evidence of student achievement, pg. 2, it wasnt clear whether the schools/districts included in the projects were actually considered Tier I or Tier II schools under the School Improvement Grants Program list of schools. According to the RILP Schools Student Improvement: 2008-2012 chart, Fallon and Fort Barton showed higher benchmark assessment percentages than Highlander, pg. 2.

Reader's Score: 3

Status: Submitted
Last Updated: 09/17/2012 02:35 PM